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United States  
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Forest Service

Alaska Region

R10-MB-186a  
June 1992



# Public Comments on the Proposed Amendment to the Chugach National Forest Land Management Plan

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## Part 1- Text





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## Public Comments on the Proposed Amendment to the Chugach National Forest Land Management Plan

*Text*

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JUNE 20, 1992

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## INTRODUCTION

The March 24, 1989 oil spill of the Exxon Valdez focused national and international attention on Prince William Sound. In the aftermath of the spill, the public has become increasingly concerned about environmental restoration of the Sound. As the primary land manager of the coastal and upland areas of Prince William Sound, the Chugach National Forest has had increasing public attention. Thus, a proposal to amend the 1984 Land and Resource Management Plan was outlined in a "scoping document" (*Chugach Land Management Plan Amendment Proposal Scoping Information*) that raised potential management issues for Prince William Sound and the adjacent Copper River Delta.

In November 1991, the scoping information document was sent to approximately 1,000 interested individuals, companies, agencies and organizations. As of June 15, 1992, 108 people have responded. The present report summarizes these responses.

## WHO RESPONDED

### Where do Respondents Live?

The majority, 88% of the respondents, were Alaskans, and those from outside of Alaska were from nine other states. Most Alaskans (45%) were from Anchorage, 12% came from Valdez, while the others came from the Matanuska-Susitna Valley, the Kenai Peninsula, and elsewhere in Alaska (Figure 1).

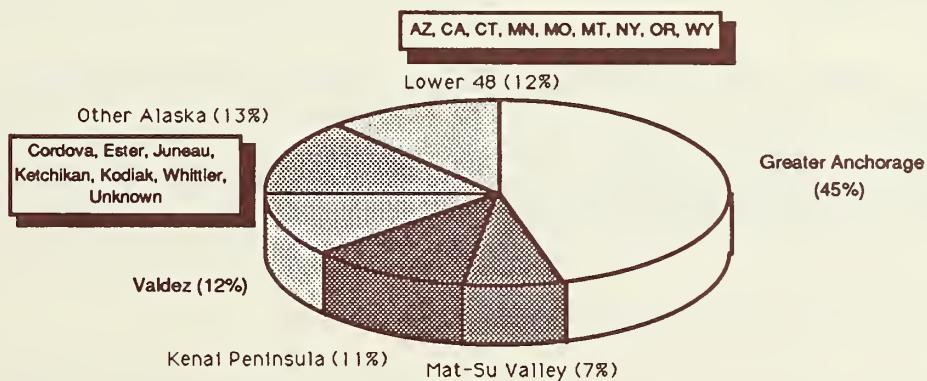


Figure 1. Geographic origin of 108 respondents to the scoping document.

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### **What Are Respondents' Affiliations?**

Private citizens accounted for 55% of the responses, followed by businesses (19%), environmental organizations (10%), industrial organizations (5%), and federal and state agencies at 4% each (Figure 2). The business category included a wide range of kinds and sizes of businesses, from mining and logging companies, to small charter boat operators and independent set-net salmon fishermen.

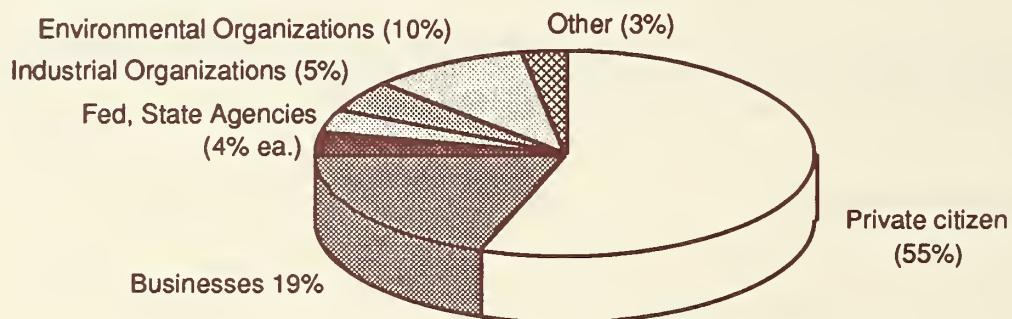


Figure 2. Affiliations of 108 respondents.

### **THE RESPONSES**

Responses to the Scooping Document included typed and handwritten letters, facsimile transmissions, and completed comment forms that were provided with the scoping document. Responses ranged in length from brief notes about one issue, to a 23-page typed letter that covered several issues in detail. Many respondents documented their views with detailed reasons and data, while others gave no reasons for their views.

### **How the Responses Were Summarized**

Each of the 108 responses was read at least twice to determine the writer's issue(s). Comments about each issue were then summarized in a data base (described below) in a few words, and also with direct quotes or paraphrases. In several cases, a respondent covered several points about the same issue, or a quote often covered more than one issue. In such cases, the same quote was repeated in the data base as many times as necessary to document the respondent's views. In this manner, approximately 750 comments were identified in the 108 responses.

Original letters are on file in the Planning Section of the Chugach National Forest, Forest Supervisor's Office, 901 East 9th Street, Anchorage, Alaska.

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## **THE DATA BASE**

Responses were entered directly into a data base (Appendix I) as they were read. The data base was created with a Microsoft Excel® spreadsheet program on an Apple Macintosh® personal computer. The data base currently resides on the hard drive of the Forest Service's Macintosh in the Public Affairs Office.

Information in the data base includes the following:

- **Response Number:** A unique number assigned to each person responding, used for tracking and sorting purposes.
- **Comment Number:** Each issue-specific comment in each response was assigned another unique number, for tracking and sorting purposes.
- **Date Received:** The date the response was received at the Chugach National Forest office.
- **Respondent Name:** The name of the respondent, and affiliation (by acronym; see below) if other than a private citizen.
- **Respondent Category Code:** A code number assigned to each respondent, based on category of their agency or organization, if any (see below).
- **Issue:** Nature of the issue, e.g., Recreation, Timber harvest, Wildlife, etc.
- **Concern:** A brief description of the respondent's concern about the issue
- **Comment:** Direct, or paraphrased (in parentheses), quote from the response. These sometimes covered two or more issues; see above.

A second data base was created to keep track of respondents' names, addresses and affiliations.

The Excel® program has powerful sorting and finding capabilities that make it easy to rearrange and search the data to suit particular needs. For example, the accompanying version (Appendix I) is sorted by both issue and respondent category. The "Find" feature will search for any word or unique text string within a selected field, or within the entire data base.

## **THE ISSUES**

### **Overview of the Issues**

A total of 21 issues were identified among the responses (Table 1). The issues generating the largest number of responses were timber harvesting, wilderness, and recreation.

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Table 1. Issues and comments in 108 responses to the proposal to amend the Chugach National Forest Management Plan.

Issue	Responses to Issue		Comments In Letters Received	
	Number	% of All Responses	Number	% of All Comments
Timber harvesting	66	61.1	115	15.3
Wilderness	61	56.5	80	10.7
Recreation	50	46.3	89	11.9
Minerals	40	37.0	48	6.4
Fish and habitat	34	31.5	67	8.9
Management	34	31.5	53	6.9
Scenic resources	29	26.9	42	5.6
Planning process	26	24.1	39	5.5
Wildlife and habitat	25	23.1	53	7.1
Subsistence	22	20.4	25	3.3
Economy	18	16.7	30	4.0
Development	18	16.7	23	3.1
Access	16	14.8	20	2.5
Multiple use	14	13.0	15	2.0
Biodiversity	10	9.3	13	1.7
Tourism	10	9.3	13	1.7
Oil spill	8	7.4	11	1.5
Wild/Scenic Rivers	4	3.7	5	0.7
Enforcement	3	2.8	3	0.4
Water quality	2	1.9	4	0.5
Other	2	1.9	3	0.4
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>108 RESPONDENTS</b>		<b>751 COMMENTS</b>	

## Comments About the Issues

The issues are summarized below in alphabetical order. To accomplish this, the basic topics covered by the comments were categorized and listed in tables for each issue, when at least two respondents discussed the topic. Note that there are more comments than issues in these tables because respondents often had several comments about the same topic. The reader is referred to the data base (Appendix I) for a detailed summary of all comments.

### Access (16 respondents with 20 comments)

Generally, responses on access said that access is too limited (Table 2).

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Table 2. Most common topics about access.

Topic	Number of respondents
Build more roads	6
Build MacLeod Harbor road (Montague I)	2
Build Whittier road	2
More boat access	2
Insure public access	2

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Comments about access included:

*"Growing up in western Montana, I came to appreciate the back country made accessible to us by ... logging roads."*

- James F. Cloud Private citizen

*"Whittier needs road to provide better access to the Sound. Tourists need better lodging facilities in Whittier, which may not come until road is built."*

- Wendy Wolfe, Alaska Division of Tourism

*"Planning for future access roads to prime recreational areas should be included in the Plan. The majority of people do not own boats or aircraft ... "*

- John L. Cerutti, Greatland Engineering

*"(Where recreation is best use) provide access for all ... public such as the elderly, handicapped and disabled, low- and middle-income people ... "*

- Mark and Sandra Stahl, Private citizens

### Biodiversity (10 respondents with 13 comments)

The basic topic of eight respondents' to this issue were that biodiversity should be preserved (Table 3).

Table 3. Most common topics about biodiversity.

Topic	Number of respondents
Preserve biodiversity	5
Keep status quo	3

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Some quotes about biodiversity follow on the next page.

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*"Maintaining biodiversity on a landscape scale is largely dependent upon incorporating appropriate habitat and resource protection at the project scale"*

- Steve C. Jacoby, Alaska Office of the Governor

*"Maintain current status; expansion, particularly in the Delta area could hurt waterfowl and bald eagles and swans."*

- Kit Traci Mullen, National Park Service

*"Human needs for fisheries, wildlife, recreation, tourism, scenic, subsistence, and wilderness resources can best be met by preserving the diversity of naturally functioning ecosystems without human manipulation."*

- Eric A. Hanson, Private citizen

### *Development (18 respondents with 23 comments)*

This issue relates to specific activities that influence the economy, so it is treated as a separate issue. "The economy" is discussed below. Four respondents each were in favor of the basic topics of "For controlled development" and "No development" (Table 4).

Table 4. Most common topics about development.

Topic	Number of respondents
For controlled development	4
No development	4
Protect fisheries from development	2
No more port facilities	2

Other comments about development covered a wide range of views and concerns. Examples are:

*"I am writing to give support to the controlled development of Chugach Forest resources."*

- Al Peterson, Private citizen

*"If Alaska is to maintain its economy and employment base, all opportunities for economic development must be maintained and explored."*

- Larry F. Blazing, Alaska Logger's Association

*"I note one major oversight ... There is no mention of potential hydro-electric sites."*

- John L. Cerutti, Greatland Engineering

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*"Development of any kind that would potentially increase stress on these fully utilized fish and game resources should be discouraged."*

- Michael Gleason, Copper River/PWS Advisory Committee

*"... back-country tourism is a permanent, non-damaging, renewable resource option for Alaska. PWS is one of the best places for that to take place - if it is not developed for short term gain."*

- Nancy Pfeiffer, Private citizen

### *Economy (18 respondents with 30 comments)*

"The economy" was an issue that came up directly and often indirectly, concerning other issues in respondents' comments; there were widely divergent opinions. Seven respondents equated the economy with resource development and extraction. However, three others believe that the pristine scenic resources and wilderness of Prince William Sound have economic benefits to growing tourism and recreation industries (Table 5).

Table 5. Most common topics about the economy.

Topic	Number of respondents
Develop resources	7
Economic value of scenery/wilderness	3
Balance economy recreation/environment	2
Feds hinder economic development	2

A sampling of comments about the economy is:

*"The economic needs of the residents within the PWS area must be a primary focus...Employment diversification...and improved access must be encouraged."*

- James LaBelle, Chugach Alaska Corporation

*"... imprudent development is not a legacy I want to leave, but I also do not want to leave a ravaged economy with no quarter given to develop a resource."*

- Terry L. Johnson, Private citizen

*"I am somewhat disappointed that this scoping document addresses both mining and timber harvest as opportunities for economic development and not a mention of commercial fishing ..."*

- Steve Schoonmaker, Salmon set-netter

*"... coastal marine wilderness is becoming a scarce and valuable resource which will generate much more income on a sustained basis than logging."*

- James Lethcoe, Alaska Wilderness Sailing Safaris

*"The Chugach plan must be a broad prescription for environmentally sensitive development, not a prescription for economic stagnation through the realization of a philosophy of lock up and starve."*

- James F. Burling, Pacific Legal Foundation

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## Enforcement (3 respondents with 3 comments)

One respondent complained that the Forest Service has been negligent at field enforcement of regulations, and two others felt that hunting needs an enforcement presence.

## Fisheries and Habitat (34 respondents with 67 comments)

Commercial fishing has been an important part of the economy and lifestyles of Prince William Sound residents for a long time, so their concern about fish resources and habitat is not surprising. Sixteen respondents felt that protecting spawning habitat is the most important fisheries concern on the Forest (Table 6).

Table 6. Most common topics about fisheries.

Topic	Number of respondents
Habitat protection	16
Exempt Main Bay from wilderness	7
Wild salmon stocks need protection	5
Fish camps need to be permanent	5
Enhancement projects are helpful	3
More coordination with other agencies	3
Fisheries impact other values little	2
No enhancement structures needed	2
Fisheries long established in economy	2

Maintaining healthy populations of wild salmon was important to 5 respondents. Several set-net fishermen from the Main Bay-Esham area are concerned that this long-standing fishery should be exempt from Wilderness designation. However, their concern may be unfounded, since this area is surrounded by, but not part of, the Wilderness Study Area. Set-netters also spoke out against regulations that require fish camps to be dismantled at the end of the season.

Some selected comments about fisheries are:

*"...no blanket streamside buffer widths."*

- James LaBelle, Chugach Alaska Corporation

*"... require environmental assessments...or EIS's prior to approval of any restoration projects."*

- Nancy Lethcoe, Alaska Wilderness Sailing Safaris

*"We are very concerned about the impacts of salmon enhancement projects on wild stocks."*

- Alan Phipps, Alaska Center For the Environment

*"It is difficult for me to understand why ... setnetters in the Main bay area are not allowed to store gear or leave tent poles and frame work to stand during the off season ... "*

- Katherine N. West, Salmon set-netter

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### **Management (34 respondents with 53 comments)**

Thirty-four respondents had advice for improving management of Chugach National Forest. The two most common topics (Table 7) present another interesting conflict for Forest planners: (1) the environment and wildlife are being emphasized too much; and, (2) more conservation and protection are needed. Three respondents thought that the Forest Service is doing a good job managing the Chugach, and another three suggested that oil spill restoration funds should be used to buy timber rights from private landowners.

Table 7. Most common topics about Forest management.

Topic	Number of respondents
Too much emphasis on environmental and wildlife issues	9
More emphasis needed for conservation and protection	7
Present management good	3
Buy timber rights with restoration funds	3
Coordinate with State more	2
De-emphasize logging	2

Selected comments about management are:

*"Everybody seems to have a favorite million acres in Alaska that they want restricted from uses other than the ones they have in mind."*

- James L. Cloud, Private citizen

*"(The present management plan) ... is weighted towards habitat protection with almost no consideration toward recreation, mining, fishing, tourism and timber harvesting."*

- Terry L. Johnson, Private citizen

*"The general topic of my views ... is opposition to development within the area."*

- Richard J. Maron, Private citizen

*"If land use is restricted, this would amount to a government taking of some private lands."*

- Scott Thorson, Private citizen

*"Mine the tourists, not the mountainsides."*

- Don Follows, Private citizen

### **Minerals (40 respondents with 48 comments)**

Generally, most respondents thought some degree of mineral development was OK (Table 8). Seven encouraged the Forest to permit mineral development outright, but 14 others cautioned that it needs to be controlled in some way, or that the effects of mining on other Forest values need to be measured and protected.

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Table 8. Most common topics about mineral development.

Topic	Number of respondents
Controlled mining OK	8
Develop mineral resources	7
Measure/protect effect on other uses	6
More assessment needed prior to development	5
No mining	5
Mining helps economy	4
Negative affect on other values	3
Exempt mining from wilderness	3
Coordinate with State agencies	2
Proposal overlooks mineral potential	2

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Five respondents want no mining on the Chugach National Forest. There were conflicting views about the mineral potential; five people thought that more assessment is needed, while two thought that mineral potential is being overlooked.

A sampling of the quotes follows:

*"Because of the tremendous negative impact that ... extractive ... activities could have ... TWS recommends that these activities be restricted to existing claims ... "*  
- Allen E. Smith, The Wilderness Society

*"Hardrock mining should be promoted where economically feasible, in order to keep the USA economy viable."*

- Dan Bowden, Private citizen

*"... problems addressed for logging should be considered for mining too. Ecological responsibility and public accountability are the key."*

- Elizabeth West, Salmon set-netter

*"Much of the Chugach National Forest overlies a major mineral terrane. The proposed amendment does not appear to have given due recognition to that fact.."*

- George R. Schmidt, Private citizen

## Multiple Use (14 respondents with 15 comments)

Those using the term were nearly all in favor of increased development. Thirteen of the 14 respondents to this issue favored multiple use management for the Forest.

Former National Park Service planner Don Follows proposes a new look at the multiple use concept:

*"By leaving an old growth stand in place and by creating a diversified recreation experience around the living resource, a new multiple use concept emerges. I call it 'multiple experience use'. Use it in place again."*

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### ***Oil Spill (8 respondents with 11 comments)***

Five respondents commented that Prince William Sound needs no more environmental stress following the oil spill. Reduction of further impacts to the area are needed, some suggested. Other comments followed no common topic.

Comments about the oil spill include the following:

*"PWS is very beautiful to us. The damage done by Exxon Valdez seems minimal to us. We don't think it was the end of the world."*

- Khoi M. Le, Private citizen

*"... we are very concerned about comments made by Mr. Barton in Trustee Council meetings which seemed to indicate a reluctance on his part to pursue (timber buybacks from Natives)"*

- Alan Philips, Alaska Center For the Environment

*"Timber harvest goals generally should be reduced because of native timber harvest plans, and to enhance wildlife and recreational values affected by the Exxon oil spill."*

- Steve Robinson, Private citizen

*"(Do not amend the CLMP) ... This is obviously a ploy by environmental factions both within and without the USFS ... while emotionalism is still running high due to the Exxon oil spill."*

- Steve Connelly, Private citizen

### ***Planning process (26 respondents with 39 comments)***

Twenty-six of the respondents gave us advice about the planning process. Several respondents on both sides of the development-protectionist spectrum felt that there should be a full *revision* of the current Forest Plan rather than an amendment (Table 9), since a revision is due in a few years anyway. Four respondents reminded us that the Forest Service had agreed to perform a "Management Area Analysis" for nine geographic Management Areas, as part of a settlement agreement for an appeal of the 1984 Forest Plan.

Table 9. Most common topics about the planning process.

Topic	Number of respondents
Full revision needed, not an amendment	6
Settlement agreement requires MAA's	4
Post spill renewed look useful	4
Kudos to FS for good planning approach	3
Multiple use management needed	2
Planning scope not broad enough	2

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Responses covered a broad range of comments about the planning process. Examples are:

*"RDC must first express its profound concern with the U. S. Forest Service's premature decision to amend the CLMP when the plan itself will be due for revision in a few years."*

- Carl Portman, Alaska Resource Development Council

*"... we aim to be involved ... in the planning activities ...that impact primitive and semiprimitive nonmotorized recreation, dispersed recreation, and wilderness ... "*

- Chad Henderson, National Outdoor Leadership School

*"We applaud the FS ... (for recognizing) ... a significant change in public attitudes toward protection of the natural values ... since the Exxon Valdez oil spill...""*

- Alan E. Smith, The Wilderness Society

*"You missed role of Resource Interpretation, Multiple Experience Use, Heritage Tourism Industry, Integrated Regional Planning, Public Service Directives ... "*

- Don Follows, Private citizen

### Recreation (50 respondents with 89 comments)

It may help to preface this paragraph by defining recreation. "Recreation" includes a variety of consumptive and non-consumptive activities, including sport fishing and hunting, boating of many kinds, hiking, camping, skiing, wildlife watching and photography. Motorized versus non-motorized activities, and dispersed/remote vs. developed activities are uses that sometimes conflict. Topics about recreation (Table 10) reflected a wide variety of opinions.

Table 10. Most common topics about recreation.

Topic	Number of respondents
Other uses impact recreation adversely	11
Emphasize remote/dispersed recreation	8
More access, trails, interpretive facilities	8
Emphasize the "value" of recreation	7
Increase recreation opportunities with roads	6
Build more campgrounds & cabins	4
Value of scenery to recreation	4
Improve enforcement/presence	4
Against motorized recreation	2
Improve remote campsites	2
Unlimited recreation will hurt wilderness values	2

Proponents of both developed and dispersed recreation each had strong, and somewhat conflicting views. Seven respondents felt that the Forest Service needs to emphasize the "value" of recreation more. Comments covered both its economic value to equipment manufacturers, retailers and tour guides, and its intrinsic value to people who recreate on the Forest to balance their busy urban lifestyles.

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Some viewpoints about recreation are:

*"Why doesn't the USFS build more campgrounds and cabins ... ? It's a vast area ... Make it more accessible to us common folks."*

- Khoi M. Le, Private citizen

*"Opportunities to establish commercial ... facilities should be protected ... "*

- Yvonne Wu Goldsmith, Alaska Department of Natural Resources

*"With the growing use of the Sound, the FS should look at all development very carefully in terms of impact on recreational use."*

- Paul Twardock, Private citizen

## **Scenic Resources (29 respondents with 42 comments)**

Respondents had few conflicting comments about "scenic resources." Everybody likes the magnificent scenery of Prince William Sound and the Copper River Delta. "Protect scenic quality" was by far the most common topic of respondents' views on this issue (Table 11).

Table 11. Most common topics about scenic resources.

Topic	Number of respondents
Protect scenic quality	15
Scenic quality will take care of itself	3
PWS scenery world class	3
No clear-cuts, mining, visual pollution	2

A sample of comments about scenic resources is:

*"The Forest should describe the relation between the spectrum of scenic quality prescriptions, such as retention visual quality ... "*

- Don Ford, National Outdoor Leadership School

*"The aftermath of the Exxon Valdez oil spill has clearly demonstrated that the public considers this a very special forest for its unique scenic resources."*

- Allen E. Smith, The Wilderness Society

*"The scenic and wildlife values of the area are why I have settled here. The Sound is unique ... there can be no more beautiful place on this planet than Prince William Sound!"*

- Paul May, Private citizen

*"Active 'management' of scenic quality is not needed nor is it justifiable."*

- Mark and Sandra Stahl, Private citizens

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## Subsistence (22 respondents with 25 comments)

Respondents generally favored protecting subsistence (Table 12). Three State agencies urged the FS to coordinate with them concerning subsistence. Three respondents feared a negative influence of logging on subsistence, and two set-netters were concerned about conflicts between recreational subsistence and commercial uses of salmon.

Table 12. Most common topics about subsistence.

Topic	Number of respondents
Continue/protect subsistence	7
Coordinate with State agencies	3
Logging has negative impact on subsistence	3
Recreational subsistence vs. economic need	2

Respondents' comments about subsistence included the following:

*"Any significant development ... will permanently change ... opportunities for subsistence, which the FS has a duty to protect under Title VIII of ANILCA."*  
- Allen E. Smith, The Wilderness Society

*"... the FS should use the resources and processes of the ADFG and the Alaska Board of Game to the maximum extent possible."*  
- Douglas Pope, Alaska Board of Game

*"I think it is outrageous that 200,000 residents of Anchorage have subsistence rights and can drop 10 fathoms of gear in the water next to my net."*  
- Elizabeth West, Salmon set-netter

## Timber Harvesting (66 responses with 115 comments)

Timber harvesting was by far the hottest issue, with 61% of the respondents offering comments. There were few middle-of-the-road views. The four most common topics (Table 13) were: (1) No timber harvesting on Forest land; (2) Continue or increase timber harvesting on Forest land; (3) Timber harvesting is OK, but it must be carefully controlled; and, (4) Timber harvesting has a negative impact on other Forest values.

Comments favoring logging to at least some degree outnumbered the "No Timber Harvesting" topic. Several respondents thought that the Forest has an obligation to harvest timber. For example:

*"The CNF must proceed with...timber sales as identified in the 1986 Settlement Agreement between the USFS and 18 Appellants."*  
- James LaBelle, Chugach Alaska Corporation

Many who wanted no logging thought that it was not economically feasible, especially for Prince William Sound, or that any logging on the Chugach should be deferred because Native lands within Prince William Sound are being logged. Others thought that timber harvesting,

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especially clear cutting, would exact too heavy a toll on the scenic, and other commercial values of the Sound. A quote similar to many is:

*"I strongly disagree with harvesting timber in P. W. S. ... I am sure that the income from tourists, who do not want to see clear cut areas, will far exceed any income from logging once every 200-400 years."*

- David Irons, Private citizen

Table 13. Basic topics about timber harvesting.

Topic	Number of respondents
No timber harvesting	20
Continue/increase logging	18
Selective/controlled logging only	14
Negative to other resources	12
Balance with other resources	4
No clear-cuts	4
Not economically feasible	4
Reduce logging	3
Buy timber rights from natives	2
Affects on Big Island MA game populations	2

### *Tourism (10 respondents with 13 comments)*

There were a variety of responses to this issue. Three believed that wilderness values enhance tourism, and two others felt that the Forest Service should emphasize tourism more.

A sampling of other comments is:

*"(There's a need for more overnight facilities) ... where people could spend the night, and branch out from there on day trips to glaciers."*

- Wendy Wolfe, Alaska Division of Tourism

*"I will support an amendment that would provide for a healthy and diverse economy through mining, fishing, tourism, recreation and logging, if loggers could not clear cut."*

- Jerry Stewart, Outfitter-guide

*"The FS should maintain a wild, old growth forest and a pure water landscape, which are the two basic elements needed for a ... healthy tourism business ... "*

- Eric A. Hanson, Private citizen

### *Wild and Scenic Rivers (4 respondents with 5 comments)*

One respondent was against any wild and scenic river designations outside existing wilderness areas, but all the other comments favored this designation for the Copper and/or Nellie Juan Rivers.

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### Wilderness (61 respondents with 80 comments)

Fifty-six percent of the respondents had views on this issue. Seven comments favored approval of the Nellie-Juan/College Fjord Wilderness Study Area by Congress and 24 more want the recommended Wilderness area *expanded* (Table 14). Comments reflecting these views are:

*"These remote and beautiful areas must be protected by wilderness designation. They should be recommended to Congress for protection."*

- Marvin Copley, Knik Canoers and Kayakers

*"We would like to see wilderness classification for the entire CNF ... "*

- Nancy Lethcoe, Alaska Wilderness Sailing Safaris

Table 14. Most common topics about wilderness.

Topic	Number of respondents
Expand wilderness beyond NJ-CF area	24
Oppose/no new wilderness	16
Designate NJ-CF area as wilderness	7
Exempt Main Bay-Esham fishery area	5
Exempt parts of NJ-CF study area	4
Emphasize wilderness values	4

Several respondents were not opposed to wilderness *per se*, but they felt that certain areas should be exempt from wilderness designation; *e.g.*, to protect the traditional commercial fishing region around Main Bay, or to retain certain areas for mineral exploration.

Sixteen respondents were opposed to any wilderness within Chugach National Forest. For example:

*"Super first priority: No more wilderness areas."*

- Steve McCutcheon, Alaska Pictorial Service

*"We do not need any more Wilderness or other restrictive use areas ... We do need a sustained yield timber harvest of 30-40 million board feet a year ..."*

- Steve Conelly, Private citizen

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### ***Wildlife and Habitat (26 respondents with 53 comments)***

Habitat protection was the most common topic of the 26 people responding to this issue (Table 15), with several requests to limit or stop logging as a way to protect wildlife habitat. It should be noted that one person (Nancy Lethcoe, co-owner of Valdez-based Alaska Wilderness Sailing Safaris) accounted for 20 of the 53 wildlife comments (Appendix 1).

Table 15. Most common topics about wildlife.

Topic	Number of respondents
Habitat protection (limit/stop logging)	12
Need non-hunting wildlife viewing areas	2
Let nature manage itself	2
Manipulate habitat	2
Introduce exotic species	2
Reduce impacts, post-spill	2

The balance of the comments covered many topics:

*"State-owned tidelands within the CRD State Critical Area is managed to protect habitat ... Management of USFS uplands should support this management intent."*  
- Evonne Wu Goldsmith, Alaska Department of Natural Resources

*"... have always thought that Montague Island could support a healthy herd of mountain goats. ... It is ideal habitat and could increase the recreational usage of that island. (Elk too)."*

- Bill West, Private citizen

*"... current CLMP is unnecessarily restrictive to timber harvesting and mining by being heavily weighted to wildlife and habitat protection."*

- William L. Hopper, NC Machinery Company

*"We would like to see the FS work with the recreation and tourism industry to develop guidelines or regulations for wildlife viewing ..."*

- Nancy Lethcoe, Alaska Wilderness Sailing Safaris

### **A PARTING WORD**

This overview report summarizes the 108 responses received through June 1992 on the Amendment Proposal to the Chugach National Forest *Land and Resource Management Plan..* The responses appear to represent a fair cross-section of organizations, agencies and individuals.

The Amendment Proposal, resulting responses from the public, and this report, are part of an ongoing process of public involvement in planning for the future of Chugach National Forest. It is emphasized that this is indeed an ongoing process. To anyone reading this report, and

## ***Public Comments on the Forest Plan Amendment***

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especially the public comments that it attempts to summarize, it will be evident that there are many, and often conflicting, views about how the Forest should be managed. Forest planners have a stiff challenge in dealing with these conflicts.

As a part of this ongoing process, the reader is encouraged to contact the Planning Team for further information, if they have additional comments about the issues, or if they want a copy of the appendices. Also, respondents' letters may be reviewed at the address below. Contact:

Gary Lehnhausen, Planning Team Leader  
Chugach National Forest  
201 East 9th Avenue, Suite 206  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501  
Phone: (907) 271-2560 FAX: (907) 271-3992

### **NOTES AND FURTHER SUGGESTIONS:**

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